

**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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KIRK CALDWELL  
MAYOR



ROY K. AMEMIYA, JR.  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
  
GEORGETTE T. DEEMER  
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR

December 21, 2020

The Honorable Ann Kobayashi  
Chair and Presiding Officer  
and Members  
Honolulu City Council  
530 South King Street, Room 202  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kobayashi and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Mayor's Office of Housing's (HOU) Final Report

As this administration comes to a close, HOU is pleased to submit our final report for your record and attention. This report encompasses goals HOU has strived to accomplish, as well as the strategic actions which will ensure continued progress on the difficult challenge of homelessness in our community.

Please accept our sincere gratitude for your continued support in providing assistance to those most vulnerable in our communities. It is only by our continued work together with key collaborators, such as our City Council, that our community will be able to ultimately end homelessness.

If you have any questions, please call me directly at 768-4303. Mele Kalikimaka me ka Hau'oli Makahiki Hou!

Warm regards,

Alexander, Marc  
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Date: 2020.12.21 09:44:59 -10'00'

Marc Alexander  
Executive Director  
Mayor's Office of Housing

Enclosure

APPROVED:

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Amemiya, Roy K Jr  
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Roy K. Amemiya, Jr.  
Managing Director

MAYOR'S MESSAGE 175

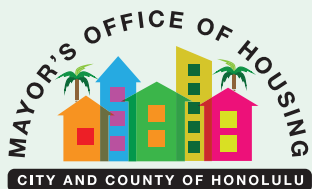
# Together we can



**As Mayor Kirk Caldwell's administration prepares to sunset, the Office of Housing team expresses heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to have served the community in addressing affordable housing and homelessness.**

While the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt by all of us, we are so grateful for the resiliency and seemingly unbounded energy and empathy of those serving our vulnerable community members, both those who are houseless and those still housed. By continuing the work together with aloha, we are confident that our community will one day be able to say that everyone has a safe place to sleep, a place to call home, and community of welcome.

**Mahalo nui loa.**



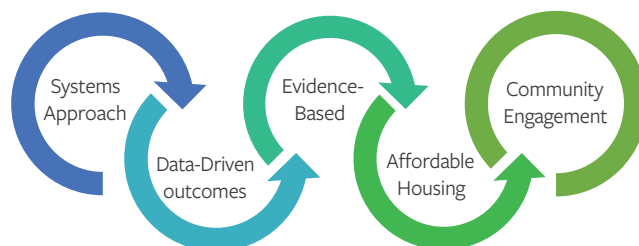
## About Us

*The Mayor's Office of Housing (hereafter HOU) established in 2011 by charter, is a two-person office including one executive director and one secretary. In addition, since December 2018 an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) – managed under the Mayor's Office of Climate Change, Sustainability & Resiliency – has been assigned to HOU full-time as a housing communications specialist.*

**HOU** – described in Section 6-106 of the Revised Charter of the City & County of Honolulu is responsible for ensuring that city, state, and federal agencies, along with private, nonprofit, and community organizations, and individuals work collaboratively to address affordable housing, senior housing, special needs housing, and homelessness. The HOU website serves as the main public repository for links to key documents and resources. The city Departments of Community Services (DCS) and Land Management (DLM) are particularly close collaborators with HOU in implementing many of the programs emerging from the city strategy and plan, along with the Departments of Customer Services, Facility Maintenance, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Permitting, and the Honolulu Police Department (HPD). Key state collaborators include the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness and the State Department of Health, especially the Behavioral Health Division. Federal collaborators include the local offices of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA), as well as the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. In the non-governmental sector, Partners in Care – the Oahu continuum of care recognized by HUD – is our major collaborator. Virtually all agencies working in homelessness on Oahu belong to PIC.

## Major Impacts

In alignment with leading national organizations and research on homelessness, the city believes that the only permanent solution to homelessness is housing, with an effective system of support services include, but are not limited to those that address mental health and substance use disorder. Such an approach requires multiagency collaboration in both plan development and implementation consistent with the charter mandate for HOU. The city's strategy for addressing homelessness is formed around five components:





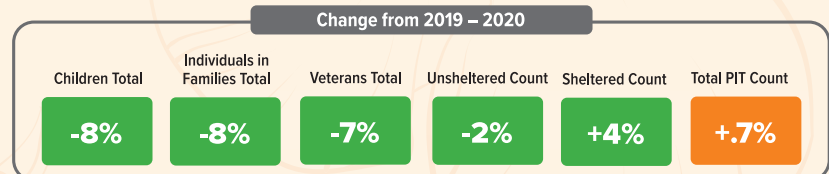
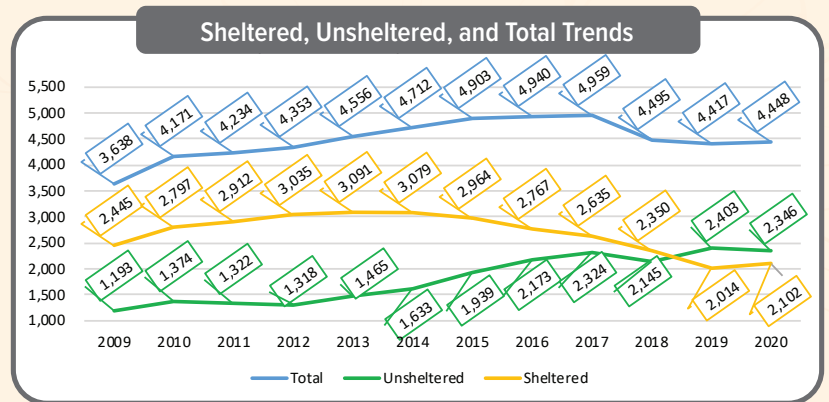
### All of the specific programs of the city addressing homelessness and housing align with this strategic framework.

The overall impact of the city's strategy and programs around homelessness – based on data from the annual Homeless Point-in-Time Count mandated by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development – include:

- 48% reduction in family homelessness from 2015 – 2020 (-1,119 persons)
- 45% reduction in homeless children (-587 children under 18)
- 24% reduction in veteran homelessness from 2015 – 2020 (-111 persons)
- 10% reduction in total homelessness from 2017 – 2020 (-511 persons)

The greatest area of challenge is with the unsheltered homeless population, who are most visible to the general community. From 2015-2020, the unsheltered homeless population increased by 21% (+407 persons).

In housing, the major impact of city initiatives is seen in the following major data points:



- In both 2017 and 2018 (the years for which data is available from the city Department of Planning and Permitting), the city exceeded Mayor Caldwell's goal of 800 units of affordable housing annually permitted (defined as 120% area median income (AMI) and below). In 2017, 1,095 units were built or permitted, including 249 accessory dwelling units (ADUs). In 2018, 1,306 units were built or permitted, including 222 ADUs and 199 rental units for 60% AMI and below.
- Since 2016 the city – under the city Department of Land Management – has acquired, completed, or has in development to add 1,328 housing units which will double the city's affordable rental housing portfolio to 2,508 units (as of July 2020). These units prioritize households with 50/60% AMI and below income levels. Additional special needs housing has also been acquired by the city Department of Community Services.





## Selected Other Accomplishments of Note

- **Selected research, reports, and articles driving and supporting strategies and actions:**
  - o "Housing in Honolulu: Analyzing the Prospect of Taxing Empty Homes" by the UCLA, Luskin School of Public Affairs (2020)
  - o "Unsheltered in Honolulu: Examining unsheltered homelessness in Honolulu 2017-2020" by the University of Hawai'i (2020)
  - o 2019 Evaluation Report: City and County of Honolulu's Housing First Program, Year 5, by University of Hawai'i at Manoa (2020)
  - o "Homelessness, mental illness, COVID-19 and SUD handled by Hawaii BHA" in Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly (11/2020): illustrates collaboration between city and state Department of Health, Behavioral Health Division
  - o "Housing and homelessness: Let's stick with what works" by Marc Alexander in Honolulu-Star Advertiser (12 April 2018)
- **First City Virtual Conferences:**
  - o "Serving Never Stops: Assisting Homeless Veterans During the Pandemic" (September 9-10, 2020); co-sponsored with Veterans Affairs and Homeless Veterans Task Force; four plenaries with 11 workshops with at least 255 participants
  - o "2020 Statewide Homeless Awareness Conference" (November 18-19, 2020); co-sponsored by state, counties, Bridging the Gap (neighbor island continuum of care) and Partners in Care; 1,170 pre-registered with four plenaries averaging 600 participants, and 32 workshops with an average of 100 participants each
- **HOU staffed and supported The United States Conference of Mayors 87th Annual Meeting was held in Honolulu (June 28 – July 1, 2019),** including Mayor Caldwell's resolution on homelessness, "Address the Crisis of Homelessness and Housing Affordability" (online at [www.usmayors.org](http://www.usmayors.org)), which was adopted by the US Conference of Mayors; also supported Mayor Caldwell's session on "Homelessness and Housing: Government, Philanthropy, and the Private Sector."
- **Co-chaired "Pillar 1, Remaining Rooted: Ensuring an Affordable Future for Our Island," of the Oahu Resilience Strategy (2019)**
- **Increased community engagement opportunities:**
  - o Revamped the HOU website, and added Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube (including our own channel)
  - o Initiated a digital newsletter now serving over 1,600 persons including government, business, and non-profit leaders, as well as the general public
  - o Published bi-annual updates to the O'ahu Homeless Help Card, with both print and online version
  - o Produced and made available in both print and online versions a wide variety of pamphlets, information sheets, and reports for the general public and specific target groups
  - o The HOU VISTA and Po'okela Intern filmed and produced a three-part documentary on homelessness, "Rock Bottom," available via Facebook and our YouTube channel
  - o Published an infographic booklet, "Your Toolkit About Individuals who identify as LGBTQ+," in collaboration with Partners In Care







The 2020 HOU Closing Team: Ryan Beckley, Roberta Maldonado, and Marc Alexander

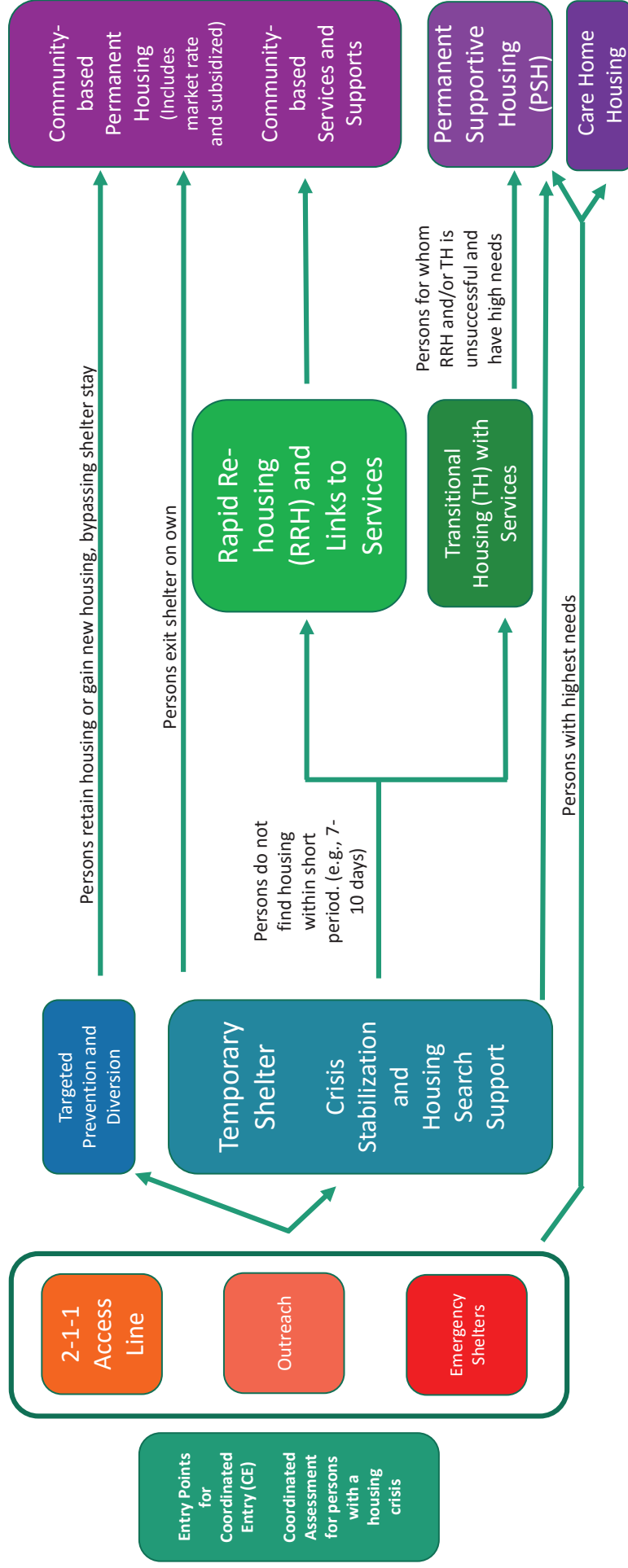
## Ongoing Major Initiatives

- **Housing First:** permanent supportive housing, including projects like Pūnāwai permanent supportive housing units; current funding sources include federal, city general funds, and state 'Ohana Zones funds
- **Mayors Challenge/Community Solutions Built for Zero (BFZ):** city-led interagency effort focused on ending veteran homelessness; co-chaired with Veterans Affairs Homeless Programs office;
- **Project-based housing vouchers (aka Section 8):** administrative rules published for public review
- **Outreach/shelter supports:**
  - o Homeless Outreach and Navigation to Unsheltered Persons (HONU): pre-COVID
  - o Outreach Navigation program: psychiatric and legal support for Assisted Community Treatment
  - o Pūnāwai Rest Stop and clinic
  - o Hale Mauiola Navigation Center
  - o 24/7 transportation to HONU/POST/shelters/services
  - o Stabilization units/beds (to continue beyond COVID-19) and crisis beds (for mental health transports) in collaboration with the state Department of Health
- **Permanent housing supports:**
  - o Landlord Engagement Program
  - o Expanded Rapid Rehousing program under Emergency Solutions Grant (CV-2): in process
  - o Actions supporting affordable housing as outlined in the Oahu Resilience Strategy (under "Pillar 1, Remaining Rooted: Ensuring an Affordable Future for Our Island"): includes reducing empty homes and developing alternative affordable housing
  - o Implementation of affordable housing policies, ordinances, acquisition and development, e.g., accessory dwelling units, short-term rental rules, transit-oriented development and other public-private partnerships like Kahauiki Village
- **COVID-19 focused:**
  - o Temporary Quarantine and Isolation Centers (includes stabilization beds/services): Ka'aahi and Waikīkī Beachside (joint with state Department of Health)
  - o Provisional Outdoor Screening and Triage facility (POST): COVID successor to HONU
  - o 24/7 COVID transportation services, especially for homeless persons





# Hawaii's Coordinated Homeless Crisis Response System





# Strategic Plans and Actions

In 2017, HOU led the development of the systems map addressing homelessness for Hawai'i, resulting in "Hawai'i's Coordinated Homeless Crisis Response System," which was endorsed by the state, the local office for HUD, and Partners in Care. Despite advances, this map still serves as the overall guide for Hawai'i's system, especially on O'ahu. In April 2019, DCS, DLM, and HOU presented, "Addressing Homelessness, a Strategic Approach," to the Honolulu City Council, summarizing the overall strategy and specific actions of the city in addressing homelessness. In November of 2019, HOU published, "Addressing Homelessness Together," a pamphlet summarizing the city strategy with highlights of key programs. In April 2020, HOU worked with key collaborators (including DCS, the city Department of Emergency Management, Partners in Care, and several state agencies) to release, "Addressing Homelessness in Light of COVID-19," outlining the goals, strategies, and key actions to keep the community healthy, especially the homeless population. These resources, along with other documents available on the HOU website, form the overall strategy of the city in addressing homelessness and housing.

Success is measured by steady declines in the Homeless Point-in-Time Count, eventually reaching "functional zero," wherein homelessness truly becomes "a rare, brief, one-time experience" ("Home Together: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness" [2018], USICH.) Action and goals for specific subpopulations leads to more effective progress and lessons learned which can be applied to other subpopulations. On O'ahu, progress has been especially evident in the subpopulations of families (-48%), children (-45%), and veterans (-24%) since 2015, and the overall system has a 10% decline in homelessness from 2017-2020.



The 2020 HOU Team: Roberta Maldonado (*HOU Secretary*), Asher Uchiyama (*Pookela Intern*), Ryan Beckley (*AmeriCorps VISTA*), and Marc Alexander (*HOU Executive Director*).

## Four Key Strategic Actions:

- Support a robust homeless crisis response system by actively collaborating with federal, state, city, and private agencies; integrating coordinated entry into city programs; enhancing community engagement; and, implementing and funding evidence-based programs such as Housing First and Rapid Rehousing
- Engage those experiencing homelessness quickly, and provide ready alternatives from the street by having interagency outreach efforts (e.g., Health, Efficiency, Long-term, Partnerships [HELP]), psychiatric street outreach, legal support for Assisted Community Treatment, mobile and fixed hygiene facilities linked with case management (e.g., Revive & Refresh Mobile Hygiene program and the Pūnāwai Rest Stop), POST/HONU outreach/shelter navigation programs, and 24/7 transportation to POST/HONU, shelters, and other services
- Expand, scale, and sustain supportive housing and affordable housing, especially at the 50-60% AMI level and below by fully utilizing the city's Affordable Housing Fund, expanding the city's portfolio of affordable housing units and special needs housing, implementing project-based housing vouchers, fully utilizing federal housing voucher funds and other permanent housing funds, returning empty units and illegal rental units to the market, expanding ADUs, and fully implementing transit-oriented development, and the city's affordable housing requirements and incentives
- Ensure housing success and prevent future homelessness by addressing long-term affordable housing needs (as summarized above), providing culturally appropriate housing alternatives, providing culturally appropriate mediation and problem-solving services (e.g., Ho'oponopono), ensuring connection to personalized supportive services (e.g., employment and training services, mental health services, and substance use disorder treatment), and providing longer-term shallow subsidies to address income gaps